

***THE
INDICATOR
December / January
2013 2014***



***Beckenham Methodist
Church***



Beckenham Methodist Church

Registered Charity No. 1138006

Bromley Road Church

Clock House Road Church

Dear Friends

As I write this Christmas Message we have only just got through Remembrance Sunday! However, I am reminded of an incident from The Great War which is immortalised in *Silent Night*, by Stanley Weintraub. (Many say the story is apocryphal. Not according to the thorough researches of Weintraub and many others).

Silent Night is the story of Christmas Eve 1914 on the World War 1 battlefield in Flanders. As the German, British and French troops facing each other were settling in for the night, a young German soldier began to sing “Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht,” Others joined in. When they had finished, the British and French responded with other Christmas Carols.

Eventually, the men from both sides left their trenches and met in the middle. They shook hands, exchanged gifts, and shared pictures of their families. Informal soccer games began in what had been “no man’s land.” And a joint service was held to bury the dead of both sides. The generals, of course, were not pleased with these events .

Men who have come to know each other’s names and seen each other’s families are much less likely to want to kill each other. War seems to require a nameless faceless enemy.

So, following that magical night the men on both sides spent a few days simply firing aimlessly into the sky. Then the war was back in earnest and continued for three more bloody years. Yet the story of that Christmas Eve lingered– a night when angels really did sing of peace on earth.

Somebody wrote the piece below entitled “Christmas in the Trenches.” They wrote from the viewpoint of a young British soldier. Several poignant verses are:

*“The next they sang was “Stille Nacht”, “Silent Night,” says I
And in two tongues one song filled up the sky
There’s someone coming towards us!” the front line sentry cried.
All sights were fixed on one lone figure coming from their side
His truce flag, like a Christmas star shone on that plain so bright
As he bravely strode unarmed into the night.
Soon one by one on either side walked into No Man’s land
With neither gun nor bayonet we met there hand to hand
We shared some secret brandy and we wished each other well
And in a flare-lit soccer game we gave ‘em hell.
We traded chocolates, cigarettes, and photographs from home
These sons and fathers far away from families of their own.
Young Sanders played his squeeze box and they had a violin
This curious and unlikely band of men.
Soon daylight stole upon us and France once more
With sad farewells we each began to settle back to war
But the question haunted every heart that lived that wondrous night
“Whose family have I got in my sights”.*

And then these significant words;

*“T’was Christmas in the trenches, where the frost was bitter hung
The frozen fields of France were warmed as songs of peace were sung
For the walls they’d kept between us to exact the work of war
Had been crumbled and were gone for evermore.”*

My prayer for all this Christmas and into the New Year is for a nation and world where people can come out of their trenches and together sing their hopes for peace. Helping others to do that is a perpetual *part* of our mission here at Beckenham Methodist Church.....and all are welcome.

Welcome to a journey with us on this pilgrimage into 2014 and God willing, way beyond.

Mike Cassidy

MONDAY FELLOWSHIP

The Monday Fellowship will cease to meet for the foreseeable future. A decision on the future of the Fellowship will be made at a later date.

As you know, Joan, who has very ably looked after the Monday Fellowship for some time, died recently. Joan has served Beckenham well for 20 years, both in our local church and at Circuit level. Her activities have been many and varied and she will be greatly missed by all of us.

The crowning moment for Joan was probably the organisation of our 125th birthday celebrations. It is only because of Joan that these came about.

Her dedication was unstinting and is a wonderful legacy. Our thoughts and prayers are with Frank and his children at this time. A Service of Thanksgiving for Joan's life will be held **at 2.00pm on Monday 9th December.**

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PROPERTY MATTERS

Lift works. At long last we have a fully functioning lift at Clock House Road thanks to Colin's badgering of the various part suppliers and fitters. Do please make use of it now - with confidence!

Wall damage at Bromley Road.

Back in October some serious damage was done to the wall of our 1991 extension, just outside the Wesley Lounge. In a freak accident a car reversed at speed, hit a Range Rover parked sideways and pushed it into our wall. Fortunately the culprit owned up so the repair will be carried out in the New Year under his insurance. We will notify everyone when that part of the passageway and staircase will have to be fenced off to enable a thorough repair to be effected.

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES FOR LIFE

The Methodist Book Centre in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, has been trading for nearly 70 years and is now the only large Methodist Bookshop in the Connexion. The Centre, which is part of the Chester and Stoke district, has recently been presented with the Large Christian Retailer of the Year 2013 award. It has just set up an online trading facility especially to help those people who live too far away to visit the shop (which has been described as an oasis in the centre of a busy shopping and commercial environment).

The name of the site is “Christian Resources for Life” to emphasise the ecumenical nature of its products and that it supplies not just books but a wide range of resources - books, study materials, music, DVDs, gifts, cards etc.

The website is www.crfl.co.uk and you are invited to register with the site to receive occasional special offers and newsletters. You are also most welcome to call Julie Ann Ellis (the Centre Manager) on 01782 212146 if you need help in choosing the right resources for you.

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All articles for the Indicator must be with David Dingley or Jenny Nichols by Sunday 19th January at the latest for distribution on Sunday 2nd February.

Volunteers are requested to join the folding and stapling party at 10.00am on Thursday 30th January in the Wesley Lounge

CHRISTIAN TRADITION

I was alarmed by Mike Cassidy's statement in the November issue of *The Indicator* when he wrote "The Christian tradition suggests that war should always be fought with proportionate means and with a clear achievable objective". That would suggest that as Christians we believe war can be justified or should I say the Church leaders have led us down that path. Presumably we are following the great tradition of the Crusaders or are we?

It's time we grew up as Christians and moved away from tradition to a full acceptance of the teachings on Jesus. Faced with the temptations of conflict and the encouragements for revolution by some of his supporters, He chose the path of peace. Yes even though He knew that it would lead to His death. He was killed by the church leaders of His day because He offered a different way. Because He dared to challenge the religious and political establishment of the day— because of the oppression of the poor which He perceived to be an offence against the God in whose image everyone is made and therefore of infinite value. If therefore if Jesus believed this, how can we not believe and follow. If everyone is of infinite value, and as your Mission states you "offer Christian love and friendship to all". How can war be justified? Only if we put self before Christ.

Too long have the established church leaders been giving obedience to one political regimes and therefore putting God to one side for convenience. The very thing that Jesus was working against! We do as Christians face a problem standing up for the teachings of Jesus. We are a minority group in our country and the world no longer has the powerful voice of yester year. Perhaps we are too comfortable in our faith so less willing to challenge and speak out, less able to follow the example of Jesus. War fought with proportionate means? Written by those who believed the church had influence. We have no control over this and never will. States and corporate greed rule.

George Hetherington

Response

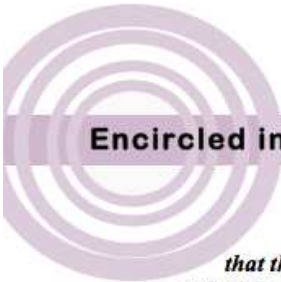
It seems apparent from Mr Hetherington's alarm at "... (my) statement in the November issue of the Indicator..." that he is a man of deep conviction and a man committed to non-violence— for which I readily applaud him. Where he loses my sympathy, though is to assume that I am opposite. It is a fact, Mr Hetherington, that Christian tradition does suggest to a world that would otherwise completely ignore it that ...war (if it must be fought) should be fought with a clear and achievable objective SO THAT A TIME OF PEACE CAN BE RECOGNISED."

You mischievously left those important words out when quoting me. My article was not 'promoting' war at all and to suggest— among other things— my article implies sympathy with the Crusades is, to say the least unworthy. In fact, I was trying to underline that the important thing for humanity is to learn from humanity's mistakes, war being one of the worst of them. Reasonable people may be persuaded by honest encounter and reasonable argument.

We live in an age now where people take virtually no notice of soap-box peddlers whose only *raison d'être* for, and the content of what they argue is to claim that they are "... standing up for the teaching of Jesus". War begins long before its declaration. The minds of people must be persuaded such that war is rejected.

The fairly recent rebuttal of Cameron and Obama's intention to bomb Iran is a good example of the importance of winning public opinion. But winning that opinion in the world of today is largely achieved by persuasion and successfully refuting the arguments for war — mongering action-not by simply claiming you are standing up for the teaching of Jesus

Mike Cassidy



Encircled in Care

The **Methodist Church**
Bromley Circuit

A healthy Christian community is one in which people know that they are loved, visitors are welcomed and young and old alike are valued and feel safe. The care that we offer, both at times of crisis and in everyday life is an active proclamation of God's love in Christ and for all the world.

**YOU are invited to participate in the (free) Pastoral Care Training Programme –
Encircled in Care**

Registration will take place up to and including the week of 25th January 2014
You can register by contacting the Circuit Administrator, Elena Wright
elena.wright.adm@gmail.com or Tel. 07401 868383

Venue – Bromley Methodist Church, College Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 3NS

Time – Thursday 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Note – The course will be conducted over 6 months. Any lessons missed could be made up later.

The Modules being taught, will be as follows –

- a) **Introduction and Foundation Module #1**
Thursday 13th February 2014
- b) **Foundation Modules #2 and Module # 3**
Thursday 13th March 2014
- c) **Prayer & Visiting and Connecting Care & Discipleship**
Thursday 10th April 2014
- d) **Children, Young People and Pastoral Care and Across the Generations**
Thursday 8th May 2014
- e) **Extended Communion and Health, Healing, Well-Being & Mental Health**
Thursday 12th June 2014
- f) **Bereavement & Loss and Domestic Abuse; Concluding Session**
Thursday 10th July 2014

A special **Circuit Service will be held in July 2014**, where the certificates will be presented to those who completed the course.

Further Information can be obtained from – Mike Cassidy, Karen George
or Bennie Harms – Course Leader [07842 063 178] bennieharms@croydonmeth.org

THE SOUTH LONDON SINGERS

Directed by JULIAN COLLINGS

present

Carols For Charity

The South London Singers present a programme of Carols for Charity every other year. Bromley Road will host the event on Saturday 14th December at 7.45 pm and this will be the first Carol Concert under their new Musical Director, Julian Collings. He will conduct his own selection of carols, with plenty for the audience to join in, as well as some Christmas poems and readings by members of the choir. One carol will receive its World Premiere, a composition by one of the choir members, Geoffrey Lawrence. Other highlights will be excerpts from Handel's Messiah and the contribution of David Thorne, well known to us all, at the organ and piano.

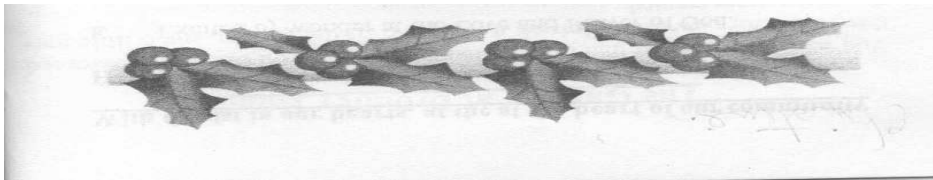
The Charity being supported this year is Macmillan Cancer Support and a representative will tell something of their work.

Tickets are £10 from David Jackson, Carol Jefferies or TCs as usual, children between 8 and 18 are admitted free.

South London Singers
Reg Charity No. 800934

Retiring collection for





Christmas Dates to Note

Sundays 8 December at 10.30am

Gift Services at Bromley Road & Clock House Road

The gifts will be donated to the Deptford Mission who have asked if we could give small toys, games etc for children but who would also like small gifts for the elderly and their volunteers who will be attending the Centre on Christmas Day e.g. Toiletries, mugs, food, (non perishable), stationery etc.

Sunday 15 December.

Family Carol Service at Clock House Road—5.00pm
Children especially welcome.

Monday 16 December.

Carol Singing for Action for Children starting from Bromley Road at 7.15pm.

Wednesday 18 December.

Carol Singing for Action for Children starting from Clock House Road at 7.15pm.

Thursday 19 December.

Pre-school Nativity Play at Clock House Road at 11.00am
This will be followed by a “mini” Christmas Fair & refreshments.

Sunday 22 December.

Carols by Candlelight at Bromley Road at 6.30pm
A traditional service of Lessons and Carols.

Tues 24 December

Christmas Communion at Bromley Road at 11.15pm.

Wednesday 25 December.

Christmas Day Combined All Age Service 10.30am Bromley Road.

Sunday 29 December.

Circuit Service at Bromley Methodist Church at 10.30am.

Tuesday 31 December.

A Watch Night Service at 10.30pm at Clock House Road. This is a Circuit service.

Sunday 5 January 2014.

The Annual Covenant Service. A combined Service at Bromley Road at 10.30am. Pastoral Visitors will be commissioned at this Service.

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Christmas Card Box

A box will be available from today at Bromley Road for the exchange of Christmas Cards. The box will be available this week and next week and the cards will be available for collection at the services on the 15th & 22nd of December. It will be helpful if when you place your cards in the box they are sorted in alphabetical order and fastened with an elastic band.

Help would be appreciated in sorting the cards. Please speak to a steward if you can help in this task.

As usual if you wish to send a card to the Church family then please give your card to the stewards.

Methodist Homes

Methodist Homes (MHA) are asking Church Members To write one extra Christmas Card and share the joy of Christmas with a MHA resident.

MHA have supplied us with Christmas Greetings Cards so that we can each write our own message of goodwill and friendship.

There are greeting cards available in the New Room at Bromley Road and Clock House Road which once completed will be passed to the MHA residents.

One MHA resident explains why it means so much to receive our cards, "May I express my gratitude for your lovely idea in asking folk to send Christmas Cards. We appreciate the warmth and concern of the whole idea."

Pick up a card today and return it to Christine Handel before the 16th December to share the joy of Christmas.

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The Leprosy Mission

I still collect postage stamps (British and foreign) for the Leprosy Mission and I am hoping there will be a good response over the Christmas period. If you can cut them from the envelope with a 1/4" border it would be appreciated. The Mission also collects postcards (used and unused), old notes and coins, medals and cigarette cards, and any of these will be gratefully received.

There is a box in the New Room for your donations.

Thank you.

Ena Hamblyn

Church Flower Rota

December 1st David Dingley
8th Diane Chorley
15th Valerie Wilson
23rd Christmas
29th United Service Bromley

January 5th Barry Stewart
12th Joy Huggett
19th Brenda Hotham
26th Sybil Cook



News from the Church Family

**We are asked to continue to pray
for of the members of our church
family who are not well..**

**Remembering Rachel Parkes, Janet Gilbey and
Ruth Marchant.**



A Journey of a Lifetime

I have just completed a very interesting and inspiring holiday in Turkey on the Lycian Coast, walking in the footsteps of St. Paul.

Flying from Gatwick we landed at Antalya where we spent the first night in a 5* hotel.

We were impressed with the cleanliness of the city and the condition of the roads (not a pothole in sight).

We were very lucky with our travelling companions as we gelled very quickly and our guide was very interesting about the history of Turkey, early Christian history and Greek Mythology.

Early next morning after a healthy breakfast we travelled to the ancient city of Myra, a site of early carved rock tombs and the restored basilica of the 4th century bishop St. Nicholas (of Santa Claus fame). The basilica also contains his tomb.

We continued our journey along the coast with lovely sea views and through stunning mountains to our next hotel at Fethiye.

Our hotel was right on the beach and the water looked so inviting I went in for a swim. Fortunately I had packed my costume and towel and afterwards we sat down with a glass of red wine and watched the sun go down.

Another early start and we visited the Daylan Lagoon where there were more early carved rock tombs. We also visited the Iztuzu Beach where the loggerhead sea turtles come to lay their eggs; we didn't see any turtles.

Our next hotel was a spa and I took full advantage of the spring waters.

The next morning we set out for the purpose of the holiday EPHESUS and what an experience! I didn't realise just how big the site was. Just to think that St. Paul spent two years here and walked down these very streets.

St. Luke's tomb is on the left as you enter the site. St. John and Mary the Mother of Jesus also lived and died here. St. John is buried here in his basilica which we visited.

Unfortunately we were unable to visit Mary's house as it was situated up on the mountain above Ephesus and we didn't have the time.

The Library of Celus is spectacular and the amphitheatre was amazing, seating 25,000 spectators which leads those who know to estimate that Ephesus had a population of at least 250,000 citizens as well as slaves.

On the way out we saw the ruined Church of Mary. It was rather an emotional and yes, a spiritual visit too. There was so much to take in and so little time to stay.

After lunch we travelled to another ancient city called Aphrodisias which is nearly as big as Ephesus with the most beautiful carved statuary and tombs. The marble quarries nearby gave rise to a flourishing sculpture school which was famous worldwide.

Aphrodisias has the largest temple to Aphrodite albeit a ruin.

Many of the best carvings are housed in a museum on site.

The next day we visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the limestone terraces at Pamukkale.

These terraces are limestone pools formed by calcium carbonate that builds up as the hot spring waters cool. The mountainside is white with the deposits.

We continued our journey through the spectacular Taurus Mountains and arrived back in our hotel in Antalya.

On our last day, we were taken to a bazaar and also visited a factory where we were shown how they weave the Turkish carpets. Still all handmade and what beautiful carpets, too pricey for most of us.

We also visited a jewellery and leather factory.

On our last night we were taken out to dinner and a floor show of traditional dancing and belly dancing. They even had a male belly dancer. It was all good fun.

After a visit to the old town, which was charming, we were taken to the airport to board our plane home.

It was an exhilarating but tiring holiday, well worth the aching legs from climbing in and out of the coach several times a day.

I should have done this holiday 15 years ago!!

David Dingley

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My Fall!

In the story of the **Good Samaritan**, a certain man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho and **fell** among thieves.

I was travelling from Downham to Beckenham and **fell** - but not among thieves!

I had visited Betty who hadn't been well. We were walking to the bus stop for me to board the single-decker bus which would join the 54 bus to take me home, when **WHAM!** down I went onto the pavement, hitting my head on the kerb; my left arm hurt and felt limp. My right hand had been holding my stick and that arm and hand were unhurt. My head was bruised and cut and dripped blood. As I came to, I saw a black man walking along with a 'phone in his hand and he offered to 'phone the ambulance. Soon after, a white 'lorry drew up, and the driver - a white man, said he had a First Aid Kit and would I allow him to bathe my forehead and apply a plaster - I said, 'Yes!'

Then Betty asked the two men if they would stay with me, while she went around the corner to fetch her handbag, so that she could go with me to the hospital. They did, and they only left when the ambulance arrived. They wished me well.

My good care was continued by the Medics, and at Lewisham Hospital my arm was X-rayed, revealing a small break in my elbow and a severely strained wrist. Concern was shown for the bruises on my forehead, so I was given an MRI scan - thankfully there was no fracture to my skull. Later, a nurse carefully bathed my face, and I was given a sling for my arm, so that I could go home. However, after a head injury one must not be on one's own overnight - so I 'phoned my good friend from Beckenham (originally from Ghana) and she was happy for me to stay the night with her.

The nurse asked us about transport and much to our surprise the NHS paid for our taxi home! Having collected my medication, Betty's son kindly took me to Comfort's place before taking his Mother home.

So, who is my neighbour?

It seems I had many! Thanks be to God.

Christine Gaskin

Bromley Road Clock house Road

19th January

Mr D Dingley 10.30am Dr C Timehin

26th January

Rev K Jobson 10.30am Mrs M Smith

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Diary Dates

December 2013

Sun	8th	10.30am	Gift Service & Parade BR
Mon	9th	2.00pm	Thanksgiving Service for Joan Thompson BR
Sat	14th	11.00am	Men's Fellowship CHR
Sat	14th	7.45pm	South London Singers BR
Sat	14th		Carol Concert WW (see poster in New Room (BR) & Long Vestry CHR) for more information)
Thurs	19th	12.00pm	Men's Fellowship Christ- mas lunch at The Warren
Tues	31st	10.30pm	Watch Night Service CHR

January 2014

Sun	5th	10.30am	Joint Annual Covenant Service BR
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Sunday Services

Bromley Road

Clock House Rd

1st December

Rev K Jobson

10.30am Mrs P Wilson

Holy Communion

8th December

Mrs P Wilson

10.30am Rev K George

Holy Communion

15th December

Dr Jo England

10.30am Mr R Baker

5.00pm Ms A Driscoll

Carol Service

22nd December

Mr D Dingley

10.30am Mr J Holman

Mrs V Wilson

6.30pm

AAW Carol Service

29th December

Circuit Service

10.30am

Circuit Service

At Bromley

at Bromley

5th January

Rev D Stanworth

10.30am

United Service-

Covenant Service

Bromley Road

Holy Communion

12th January

Rev D Stanworth

10.30am

TBA

USEFUL CONTACTS

Minister in Charge: Rev Rachel Parkes 8658 6484

Stewards: Christine Handel (Senior) 8658 1381

Irene Antwi 8778 2124, Comfort Lawson 3539 4944

Sheila Priestman 8460 1091, Barry Stewart 8325 8861

Church Council Secretary: Sheila Priestman 8460 1091

Church Treasurer: Mark Cheesman 8249 5522

Junior Church Co-ordinator: Mary Cook 8656 2815

Flower Secretaries: BR - Margaret Hazlewood 7733 6116

CHR - Irene Antwi 8778 2124

Property Co-ordinator: David Jackson 8656 2815

Property Stewards: Colin Wilson 8464 3768

David Jackson 8656 2815

Barry Stewart 8325 8861

Roy Charles 8402 5562

Graham McLeod 8325 5243

Rob Love 8658 9771

Room Booking Officers: BR - David Jackson

CHR - Graham McLeod 8325 5243

Brownies: Carole Dewar 8650 9027

Guides: Karen Millican 8650 6248

Beavers: Mandy Sarhane 8650 4822

Cubs: Steve Shirley 8650 0330

Scouts: Gordon Wilson 8650 1035

Web Site: <http://www.beckenhammethodistchurch.co.uk>

Email Address: (Being established)